Notes from Maidstone CAN Chat Monday 16th February 2026
Lockmeadow Foyer
Informal start 19.00 with items for discussion from 19.30

We had an excellent turn out, particularly considering it was half term and lots of people were away.
Attending…
Ben Darlington, Bryan Orwell, Jacqui Orwell, Destiny Krogsgaard, Bernie Cumberland, Lynn Bryant, Shirley McDonald, Angela Sinclair, Ian Greenfield, David Harman, Geraldine Lawrence, Maria Paez, Tansy Watts, Diane Frewer, Chin Waterfall, Coby Gardiner, Lucy Guy, Sally Edwards and Duncan Edwards

Apologies…
Glyn Williams, Polly Williamson, Vincent Jasper, Chris Passmore

Note about the meeting format

The location is excellent in terms of its temperature, space, access to food, projector etc but it can be difficult to hear speakers and ensure everybody is able to be part of the discussion. For this reason we are thinking that the format for future meetings will consist of three sections:

1. Short formal stand up prepared presentations about key subjects of interest to everybody.
2. Small group discussions where we need to work through ideas and collaborate.
3. Quick 3 minute pitches on particular subjects

We also want to maintain the sense of spontaneity and informality in the meetings. Please comment and discuss this if you have thoughts and ideas.

Seaquer

The Seaquer app is up and running. Ben explained that its purpose is to help us connect with nature and record our observations, feelings and appreciations. These can be shared in the community and used to ensure our vital natural assets are properly recognised and protected.

The roll-out of biodegradable QR codes heat etched into wood is going well, there is good coverage in Vinters Park Nature Reserve, a few in Bearsted and other sites are currently being selected.

The action for us is to seek out the QR codes and try out the app, Vintners Park Nature Reserve would be a good place to start. Also to identify green spaces which would benefit from installation of Seaquer QR codes.

Emergency Briefing

This is a national high quality media presentation fronted by Chris and Deborah Meaden designed for delivery in local communities. This will be followed by a discussion afterwards. We would like to bring this to Maidstone, either at Lockmeadow or another suitable venue. Awaiting dates for the film being available at the moment, potentially end of March.
Link to the trailer is here: https://fb.watch/FhORHah7gG/

Repair Cafe

The February event was amazing, a vibrant Repair Cafe and Nature Zone. We watched a video that was created by Chris Passmore of the event.
https://youtube.com/shorts/bMeXm3aYENo?si=SD1doMpx4Y9Kcy7M

Around 50% of the people in the room had seen the February newsletter which featured the Repair Cafe. The newsletters and the website are achieving a really good level of communication. We have a fledgling team on communication and if anybody would like to help they are warmly invited to get in touch. This is a link to the February newsletter.
https://maidstonecan.eco/newsletter/newsletter-february-2026/

Repair Cafe Themes for 2026

The special themes at the Repair Cafe are our big idea for 2026 and so far it has gone really well. Everybody can see the themes on the website: Website
It was asked for people to think about interesting exhibitors that we can invite for Sport, Out Doors and all the other themes through to November when we are doing a sustainable Chirstmas. ie

- Barming football - Oakwood Park flood lights was mentioned.
- Maidstone Hockey Club
- Boots on Adventure
- Ideas for ‘giving up’ for example yoghurt maker instead of yoghurt pots.
- Charity shops, recycling furniture
- Story teller / Role play

The Big Day Out

13th June 2026, planning for an even bigger Big Day Out. The current phase of work is coordinating with a long list of green spaces in Maidstone on how they would like to be part of the Big Day Out. There is an opportunity for you to be involved in 2 ways:

1. Join the team coordinating with those involved in Big Day Out
2. Talk to your local green space about being involved

The Website

Richard Conyard has re-hosted the website so it's now picked up in more searches. Try your own Google Search or ask AI about Maidstone CAN to see what is being picked up by the search engines.
We have pages on:

- Maidstone CAN Zone
- Chat
- Big Day Out
- Lockmeadow Litter Picking
- Maidstone West Station Adoption
- Repair Cafe

Plus we have the calendar and newsletters.

Anybody from the group who runs a project & wants to publish Maidstone CAN information, can have access to update their part of the website. Richard is offering short tutorials on how to do this so please get in touch if you would like to be on the next tutorial.

Maidstone West Station Adoption

We skipped over this item because Vincent was not with us, but since the meeting, Vincent has submitted a Small Grant Funding Application for planters on platform 2, this is great news. Watch out for progress over the next few months. Anybody who wants to be part of the Maidstone West Station Adoption team is invited to get in touch.

Visits to Recycling Centres

A group visited SWEEEP Kuusakoski in Sittingbourne on 12th Feb 2026. This is a very worthwhile visit, see website for photos and to add yourself to the waitlist for future visits: Link to Website.

Litter Picking

Litter picking events are on the website MaidstoneCAN.eco, There is a normal Lockmeadow Litter Pick on Sun 22nd February starting at 10am & coming up, one on Sun 29th March to support the Great British Spring Clean. We need to know if people are coming so we can pledge how many bags we think we can pick up. Contact details are on the website.

AOB

Using our buying power, recommendations from the group.

- Triodos bank, we need to ask them if they can provide business banking.
- Eco Talk - mobile phone contract provider.